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Urmston Urban District Council

Annual Report

OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER
OF HEALTH

for the year

1952

Including the Report of the
Chief Sanitary Inspector

Urmston Urban District Council

Chairman of the Council, 1952-53:

COUNCILLOR Mrs. A. M. WILKINSON, J.P.

HEALTH COMMITTEE, 1952-53:

Chairman: Councillor H. HOWSDON.

Vice-Chairman: Councillor W. WROE, J.P.

Councillor G. H. CARNALL.

„ L. P. BROOKES.

„ A. C. ROBERTSON.

„ Mrs. A. M. WILKINSON, J.P.

„ Mrs. R. V. ROYLE-HIGGINSON.

„ Mrs. L. M. TOMLINSON, J.P.

„ A. E. WILLIAMS.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT STAFF:

Medical Officer of Health:

E. H. WALKER, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Chief Sanitary Inspector:

*W. WOOD, C.S.I.B., M.S.I.A.

Sanitary Inspectors:

*F. G. V. RUMSEY, C.S.I.B., M.S.I.A.

*W. S. ASTALL, C.S.I.B., M.S.I.A.

*W. F. MALING, C.S.I.B., M.S.I.A.

*Certified Meat and Food Inspector.

Chief Clerk:

G. W. BLAKE, A.C.I.S., A.R.I.P.H.

Clerks:

E. MARGERISON.

T. L. COOKE.

(Mrs.) B. IRLAM (née Harrison); resigned 30/4/52.

(Miss) M. SWINDELLS; commenced 26/5/52; resigned 12/8/52.

(Mrs.) D. M. KIRBY; commenced 15/9/52.



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SECTION A.—GEOGRAPHICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

The urban district comprises the three townships of Urmston, Flixton and Davyhulme in the County Palatine of Lancaster, some six miles south-west of the City of Manchester. In shape the district is an irregular triangle formed into an isthmus by the natural boundaries of the River Mersey along the south and the Manchester Ship Canal (which is the canalised River Irwell) on the west and north. The district measures approximately 3·28 miles from north to south and 3·37 miles from east to west, and covers an area of 4,799 acres of land. In contour there is little variation, the average level being 65 feet above the Ordnance datum.

The population at the 1931 Census was 9,284 persons, and the estimated population mid-1952, as computed by the Registrar General, was 38,800. The number of occupied houses at 31st December, 1952, according to the rate books, was 12,252, rateable value £322,248 (the highest among the 68 urban districts in the county) and the sum represented by a penny rate £1,290.

Predominately residential in character, the district has developed rapidly in recent years. In the township of Urmston may be said to be the greatest concentration of older houses, large and small, as well as substantial modern residential property, the main shopping centre and the principal railway station. The townships of Flixton and Davyhulme are mainly comprised of modern residential estates, pleasantly interspersed with abundant open spaces and two golf courses. The most northerly part of Davyhulme comprises more than half of the industrial area of Trafford Park of which, in the Urmston part, are situated some eighty factories and workplaces, many of which are world famous for their products and employing between them about 16,000 workpeople. The industries in Trafford Park include petroleum storage, oil refining, manufacture of asbestos, steel, wire, chemicals, furniture, textile machinery, also engineering and electricity works.

VITAL STATISTICS.

BIRTH RATE.—Births registered were 532 representing a birth rate of 13·7 per thousand of the estimated population. The birth rate shows a continued fall and is approaching the low levels experienced throughout the country. This nation-wide trend, despite the fact that childbirth is safer than ever before, is not unconnected with economic conditions and the continued housing shortage.

The following table gives the total number of live births, illegitimate births and still-births for the past five years.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Total Live Births.</i>	<i>Illegitimate Births.</i>	<i>Stillbirths.</i>
1952	532	21	13
1951	603	23	14
1950	623	22	15
1949	673	29	15
1948	673	28	14

GENERAL DEATH RATE.—The total number of deaths during the year was 407 representing a crude death rate of 10·5 per thousand of the estimated population, which is a decrease compared with the year 1951. A detailed analysis of the causes of death is shown in the table on page 6.

The following table gives particulars of deaths during the past five years:—

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Number of Deaths.</i>	<i>Crude Death Rate per 1,000 Estimated Population.</i>
1952	407	10·5
1951	445	11·5
1950	401	10·3
1949	422	10·8
1948	382	9·9

INFANT MORTALITY.—The number of infant deaths registered during the year was 11, which represents a rate of 21 per 1,000 live births. The following table shows the infant mortality during the past five years:—

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Number of Deaths.</i>	<i>Rate per 1,000 Live Births.</i>
1952	11	21
1951	7	10
1950	13	21
1949	21	31
1948	20	29

NEO-NATAL MORTALITY.—There were eight deaths reported during 1952 of infants under the age of one month. Neonatal deaths for the past five years were:—

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Number of Deaths.</i>	<i>Death Rate per 1,000 Total Births.</i>
1952	8	15
1951	4	7
1950	5	8
1949	11	16·3
1948	10	14·8

MATERNAL MORTALITY.—It is pleasing to note that there were no deaths reported during 1952 due to “maternal causes” which may be regarded as a tribute to the standard of life in Urmston and the ante-natal care of expectant mothers. The following table gives particulars of maternal deaths for the past five years:—

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Number of Deaths.</i>	<i>Death Rate per 1,000 Total Births.</i>
1952	Nil	Nil
1951	1	1·62
1950	1	1·57
1949	2	2·91
1948	Nil	Nil

CAUSES OF DEATH DURING THE YEAR 1952.

<i>Causes.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
1. Tuberculosis, Respiratory	6	2
2. Tuberculosis, Other	—	—
3. Syphilitic Disease	1	—
4. Diphtheria	—	—
5. Whooping Cough	—	—
6. Meningococcal Infections	1	1
7. Acute Poliomyelitis	—	—
8. Measles	—	—
9. Other Infective and Parasitic Diseases	—	—
10. Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	8	4
11. Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus	7	2
12. Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	—	9
13. Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	—	2
14. Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms	16	16
15. Leukæmia, Aleukæmia	1	4
16. Diabetes	2	—
17. Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	20	35
18. Coronary Disease, Angina	29	10
19. Hypertension with Heart Disease	4	6
20. Other Heart Disease	30	51
21. Other Circulatory Disease	12	11
22. Influenza	1	—
23. Pneumonia	6	12
24. Bronchitis	24	5
25. Other Diseases of Respiratory System	3	1
26. Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	4	1
27. Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhœa	—	4
28. Nephritis and Nephrosis	1	5
29. Hyperplasia of Prostate	1	—
30. Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion	—	—
31. Congenital Malformations	1	—
32. Other Defined and Ill-defined Diseases	17	19
33. Motor Vehicle Accidents	1	—
34. All Other Accidents	2	5
35. Suicide	3	—
36. Homicide, and Operations of War	—	—
	202	205

SECTION B.—GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

LABORATORY FACILITIES.—With the exception of swimming bath water all examinations are undertaken by the Public Health Laboratory Service, Monsall Hospital, Newton Heath, Manchester. Samples of swimming bath water are submitted to the Clinical Research Association Ltd., London.

The total number of examinations carried out during 1952 was 433, made up as follows:—

Throat Swabs	18
Nasal „	7
Aural „	1
Fæces	123
Blood	1
Menstrual Fluid	1
Milk:—	
Tubercle Bacilli	24
Methylene Blue Reduction Test	107
Phosphatase Test	96
Turbidity	1
Ice-Cream	41
Drinking Water:—	
Bacteriological	2
Chemical	2
Swimming Bath Water:—	
Bacteriological	4
Chemical	4
Food:—	
Bacon	1

LOCAL LEGISLATION.

The Urmston Urban District Council Act, 1935, received the Royal Assent on the 4th August, 1935. The Act conferred powers on the Council, additional to those found in the Public General Acts, for the improvement, health and good government of the district.

The Urmston Urban District Council Act, 1949, which received the Royal Assent on the 13th July, 1949, provided the Council with the necessary powers for the development and maintenance of the District Heating service on the Woodsend and Calderbank housing estates at Flixton. The Act also authorised the Council to make further and better provision for the improvement, health and local government of the district.

The following adoptive Acts of Parliament are in force in the district:—

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890 (Parts III and IV).
Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907 (Parts II, IV, VI,
and Section 95 of Part X).

Public Health Act, 1925 (Parts II and VI).

Private Street Works Act, 1892).

Byelaws made by the Council relating to the following are in force:—

Cemetery.

Houses Let in Lodgings.

Transport of Food.

New Buildings.

Pleasure Fairs.

Sterilisation of Animal Feeding Meat.

Hairdressers and Barbers.

Handling, Wrapping and Sale of Food.

HOSPITALS.—There are two hospitals situate within the district, namely Park Hospital, Davyhulme, with 426 beds providing a full range of specialist services and a large out-patients department; and Urmston Cottage Hospital, which with 22 beds is devoted entirely to the care of lying-in maternity patients.

MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS.—There are 13 doctors resident in the district and about ten residing in neighbouring districts who practice in the area.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948.—The provisions of this Act relating to the compulsory removal to hospital of neglected persons were invoked on two occasions. The living conditions of a number of elderly people, in the absence of adequate means of care, are a source of anxiety yet the requirements of the Act do not permit official action to be taken in some cases even where home care is utterly inadequate to maintain the most meagre standard of life and comfort.

SECTION C.—SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER SUPPLY.—This is supplied by the Manchester Corporation; the quality is excellent and the quantity sufficient. Water is supplied from the public mains to all dwellinghouses with the exception of three which are supplied from wells. No liability to plumbo-solvent action has been noticed nor any evidence as to contamination by lead. Two bacteriological examinations and two chemical analyses were carried out during the year, the results of which proved satisfactory.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.—The sewage from the township of Davyhulme is received and treated at the Sewage Disposal Works of the Manchester Corporation at Davyhulme. Sewage from Urmston and Flixton is received at the Council's Sewage Works at Flixton where it is treated prior to discharge into the Manchester Ship Canal. Reconstruction of parts of the sewerage system of the district is contemplated by the Council by the replacement of both foul and surface water sewers which were laid down many years ago and are now barely adequate to cope effectively with a flow which exceeds that for which they were originally designed.

Since early 1950 the Council has been negotiating with the Ministry of Housing and Local Government in respect of proposals to construct two new pumping stations at Church Road and Carrington Road, Flixton, to replace the existing compressed air pumping plant at The Grove, Flixton, which is almost worn out, the Surveyor having great difficulty in keeping it going. Because of the restriction on capital expenditure imposed by successive Governments since the negotiations first began and the need to economise on steel and other materials, considerable modifications to meet the wishes of the Ministry have been made from time to time. The Surveyor has had many interviews in London with engineering officers of the Ministry concerning the technical details of the project.

The original estimate of cost was £9,542, but this has now been reduced, in successive stages of economising, to £6,500. The replacement of the existing compressed air pumping plant is now a matter of grave urgency and it is hoped that the Minister's approval will be received in the very near future.

SANITARY ACCOMMODATION AT END OF 1952.

No. of Middens	1
„ Closets attached to middens	1
„ Pail Closets	11
„ Dry Ashpits (excluding middens)	Nil
„ Movable Ashbins for Refuse	12,870
„ Trough Closets	25
„ Waste-water Closets	41
„ Fresh-water Closets	12,620

PUBLIC CLEANSING.—Refuse collection, refuse disposal, and street gully emptying are carried out under the supervision of the Chief Sanitary Inspector and street sweeping is under the control of the Surveyor. The whole of the house and trade refuse is

collected by mechanical refuse collection vehicles and removed to a tip in the Urmston Meadows, where it is disposed of exclusively by controlled tipping. This tip, with land for its future extension, is owned by the Council and much of that already tipped upon has been soiled over and reclaimed for agricultural use.

Since October, 1951, the provision of domestic dustbins has been a rate-borne service.

Street gully emptying is carried out by a specially designed motor vehicle of 750 gallons capacity.

CAMPING SITES.—There are no such sites, either military or civilian, within the Urban District.

SMOKE ABATEMENT.—There are 80 factory and works chimneys in the district and during the year 37 smoke observations were taken. The time limit allowed for emission of black smoke is two minutes per half-hour.

The Council is engaged with neighbouring local authorities in a scientific investigation of the incidence of atmospheric pollution by new industrial undertakings in the Carrington—Partington area of the adjoining rural district of Bucklow. The Council is advised by and has the technical assistance of officers of the Manchester and District Regional Smoke Abatement Committee.

SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.—The main feature of the Council's modern indoor baths is a swimming pool of 180,000 gallons capacity wherein the water is kept constantly at a temperature of 70 degrees Fahrenheit and treated by continuous filtration and chlorination. Eight samples of water were taken from the swimming pool during the year and submitted for bacteriological and chemical examination, and the results showed the water to be quite safe for bathing purposes.

DISINFESTATION.—Twenty-one Council houses and 46 privately-owned houses were found to be vermin infested and disinfestation was carried out in each case. In cases of serious infestation by bed bugs fumigation is carried out with hydrogen cyanide, the work being done by contractor. For slight infestation, D.D.T. treatment is carried out by the Health Department staff.

SCHOOLS.—There are 16 maintained and two private schools in the district, most of which are provided with modern type sanitary conveniences on the water-carriage system. Nineteen inspections were carried out during the year. No closure of schools for epidemic illness was necessary during 1952.

FACTORIES.—Details of the action taken under this heading are to be found in the table on page 12.

HOUSES-LET-IN-LODGINGS. There are no “common lodging houses” in the Urban District but there are 8 “houses-let-in-lodgings.” Four inspections were carried out during the year and their sanitary conditions could be classed as fair.

RAG FLOCK AND OTHER FILLING MATERIALS ACT, 1951.—At the end of the year the number of registered premises was one. There are no premises licensed for the manufacture or storage of rag flock.

FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 and 1948.
Inspections for Purposes of Provisions as to Health.

PREMISES	No. on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
FACTORIES with mechanical power	141	183	58	Nil
FACTORIES without mechanical power	34	12	8	Nil
OTHER PREMISES under the Act (including works of building and engineering construction but not including out-workers' premises) ...	44	24	Nil	Nil

Cases in which Defects were Found.

Particulars	Number of Defects				
	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Inspector	by H.M. Inspector	Occupiers Prosecuted
Want of Cleanliness (Sec: 1) ...	3	1	—	—	—
Overcrowding (Sec: 2) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (Sec: 3)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate Ventilation (Sec. 4)	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (Sec: 6)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences (Sec: 7)					
Insufficient	2	—	—	—	—
Unsuitable or defective ...	59	23	—	2	—
Not separate for sexes ...	3	2	—	—	—
Other Offences	—	—	—	—	—
	67	26	Nil	2	Nil

SECTION D.—HOUSING.

Number of new houses erected during the year:—

	<i>Prefabricated houses.</i>		<i>Traditional permanent Houses.</i>	<i>Flats.</i>
	<i>Temporary.</i>	<i>Permanent.</i>		
(i) By the Council	Nil	Nil	115	14
(ii) By other local authorities ...	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
(iii) By other bodies or persons ...	Nil	Nil	114	Nil

1—INSPECTION OF DWELLING-HOUSES DURING THE YEAR:—

(1)—(a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	255
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	751
(2)—(a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932	14
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	32
(3)—Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	10
(4)—Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	245

2—REMEDY OF DEFECTS DURING THE YEAR WITHOUT SERVICE OF STATUTORY NOTICES:—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action	178
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3—ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR:—

(a) Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:—	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which statutory notices were served requiring repairs ...	3
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of statutory notices:—	
(a) By owners	Nil
(b) By the Council in default of owners ...	Nil

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts:—

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which statutory notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	82
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of statutory notices:—	
(a) By owners	62
(b) By the Council in default of owners	3
(c) Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936	Nil
(d) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936	Nil

4—HOUSING ACT, 1936, PART IV—OVERCROWDING.

(a)—(i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year	} No figures available
(ii) Number of persons dwelling therein	
(iii) Number of families dwelling therein	
(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	Nil
(c)—(i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	Nil
(ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases	Nil

5—HOUSING ACT, 1949:—

(a) Number of schemes submitted:	
(i) By private individuals	Nil
(ii) By the Council	Nil

SECTION E.—INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

MILK SUPPLY.—The milk distributed throughout the district is of a high standard and 43 distributors were registered at 31st December, 1952. The following licences under the Milk (Special Designation), (Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949, and the Milk (Special Designation), (Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk) Regulations, 1949, have been issued:—

Tuberculin Tested Milk	25
Accredited Milk	1
Pasteurised Milk	32
Sterilised Milk	38

Extensive sampling of milk produced or retailed in the district has been carried out, the number of samples taken was 228, details of which are shown in the report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.—All shops and stalls retailing, storing or preparing foodstuffs are inspected regularly by the sanitary inspectors and action taken where necessary. With the exception of occasional pig killing on local farms, no animal slaughtering has been carried out in the district since the inception of centralised slaughtering by the Ministry of Food.

Under Section 115 of the Lancashire County Council (Rivers Board and General Powers) Act, 1938, any person who offers or exposes for sale in the Urban District any meat food product, fish, fruit or vegetables, must be registered by the Urban District Council being the local authority for the purpose of the Act within the Urban District. At 31st December, 1952, there were 20 registrations in force.

All persons engaged in the manufacture and sale of ice-cream are required to be registered under the provisions of the Urmston Urban District Council Act, 1935.

The Lancashire County Council are the Food and Drugs Authority responsible for the sampling duties under the “adulteration” provisions of the Act of 1948. The County Medical Officer of Health supplies the following particulars regarding samples obtained in the district during 1952:—

A total of 218 samples was obtained; of these 152 were of milk (this total included 2 Channel Islands milk) and the 66 others comprised:—

1 butter.	1 dried beans.
1 cheese.	4 cocoa.
3 cooking fat.	4 pickles.
3 margarine.	4 mineral waters.
4 rice.	1 dried sage.
1 corn flour.	2 sauce.
1 dried egg.	1 semolina.
3 sugar.	2 ice-cream.
3 coffee and chicory essence	2 beef sausage.
liquid.	2 arrowroot.
2 bicarbonate of soda.	1 aspirin tablets.
1 sago.	2 camphorated oil.
3 custard powder.	3 bacon.
1 bread.	2 fruit, canned.
4 dried peas.	1 lime marmalade.
1 tomato ketchup.	1 lard.
1 essence of Rennet strawberry flavour.	

All these samples were reported by the County Analyst to be genuine, with the exception of the following:—

SAMPLE.	RESULT OF ANALYSIS.	ACTION TAKEN.
1 informal milk.	Freezing point indicated the presence of 2·6% extraneous water.	Further sample obtained.
1 formal milk.	Deficient 13·3% fat.	Vendor notified and further sample obtained.
1 formal milk.	Deficient 3·3% fat.	Vendor notified and interviewed.
1 sago.	Consisted of tapioca.	Vendor communicated with.
1 informal milk.	Deficient 3·3% fat.	Vendor notified.
1 informal milk.	Deficient 1·6% fat.	} Same vendor. Vendor notified
1 informal milk.	Deficient 5·0% fat.	
1 informal milk.	Deficient 16·6% fat.	Formal sample obtained.
1 informal milk.	Deficient 6·6% fat.	Vendor notified.

SECTION F.—PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Measles was prevalent during the Spring of 1952. Scarlet Fever notifications increased from 32 in 1951 to 72 in 1952. Dysentery showed a welcome decline, there being 21 cases in 1952 compared with 95 in 1951. It is believed that the somewhat rigorous supervision exercised by the Sanitary Inspectors has contributed much to the decline of this highly infective condition. Diphtheria has again been conspicuously absent from the notification figures. Thirty-two cases of Puerperal Pyrexia were notified, compared with 16 in 1951, all the cases occurring in hospital (30 in Park Hospital and 2 in Urmston Cottage Hospital; two of the former and one of the latter were subsequently transferred to Ladywell Hospital, Salford). The table on page 17 gives the incidence of notifiable infectious diseases during the year.

DISINFECTION AFTER INFECTIOUS DISEASES. — Ninety-four houses were disinfected during the year by formaldehyde gas, the work being carried out by the Health Department staff.

TUBERCULOSIS.—There is no evidence of excessive incidence of, or mortality from tuberculosis in any particular occupation in the district.

It has not been found necessary to take any action under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis Regulations), 1925, relating to Tuberculous employees in the milk trade and no compulsory removal to hospital has been required under Section 172, Public Health Act, 1936.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES (other than Tuberculosis) NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR 1952.
(After confirmation or correction of diagnosis).

Disease	Total cases at all ages	YEARS								Total Deaths	Cases removed to Hospital	Deaths in Hospital
		0	1-	3-	5-	10-	15-	25-	45-	65 & over		
Scarlet Fever ...	72		3	9	43	14	2	1			6	
Paratyphoid Fever ...	1							1			1	
Measles ...	487	5	99	133	226	6	8	10			2	
Whooping Cough ...	143	10	26	54	51	1		1				
Acute Pneumonia ...	12			1	1		1	2	3	4		
Puerperal Pyrexia...	32						16	16			3	
Acute Poliomyelitis : (Paralytic) ...	2		1					1			2	
Meningococcal Infection ...	2	1	1									
Dysentery ...	21	1		1	9		2	4	3	1	2	
Erysipelas ...	6							2	4			
Food Poisoning ...	5				1			3	1		1	
Totals ...	783	17	130	198	331	21	29	41	11	5	17	

New cases and mortality during 1952 are shown in the table below:—

AGE PERIODS	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Years								
0—								
1—								
2—			1					
5—	1	1		1				
10—								
15—	2		1					
20—	1	1						
25—	3					1		
35—		3						
45—	2							
55—	5				4	1		
65—	2				2			
75 & upwards								
Totals	16	5	2	1	6	2		
	21		3		8		Nil	

There were two deaths from Tuberculosis which had not previously been notified, two males, ages 72 years and 55 years.

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1952.**

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF
THE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF
URMSTON.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

In so far as the environmental Health Services were concerned, the past year has been generally uneventful, major inception arising from policy decisions by the Council have been limited, and in consequence more time and attention has been given to those routine inspections necessary to maintain the requisite standards of sanitation and hygiene.

The factory area of Trafford Park, because of new development and the increase in canteen facilities, was given priority; every works here situated was completely inspected and such defects as were discovered were either remedied or are in process of completion.

Refuse collection and disposal work continued in a systematic manner, although it is unfortunate that the required degree of efficiency was not reached, largely because of the continued ebb and flow of labour available for the work.

Salvage income fell alarmingly, when in the first few months of the financial year waste paper prices were cut by over 50% and a limitation placed on output; it is a regrettable fact that as yet there is no real sign of recovery.

May I once more express my thanks for the assistance and consideration I have received from the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee, from Dr. Walker and all members of the staff and employees during the year.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM WOOD,

*Chief Sanitary Inspector
and Cleansing Superintendent.*

COMPLAINTS.

Total number of complaints investigated	635
Total number of complaints confirmed	506
Total number of visits (including re-visits)	1,494

<i>Nature of Complaint.</i>	<i>Number Received.</i>	<i>Confirmed.</i>
Accumulations	18	10
Animals So-Kept	13	4
Atmospheric Pollution ...	6	3
Dirty Premises	9	3
Flooding	16	11
Housing Defects	208	182
Obstructed Drains	92	82
Overcrowding	5	—
Rats and Mice	109	86
Other Vermin	65	56
Miscellaneous	94	69
	635	506

ABATEMENT OF NUISANCES, ETC.

The following notices were served during the year:—

Informal.
391

Statutory.
196

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

Housing Acts, 1936-1949.

(Byelaws with respect to Houses-Let-In-Lodgings).

Proceedings were instituted in 1951 against an owner for contravention of the above byelaws and Judgment was given in favour of the Council. In 1952 an Appeal was heard against this decision and was allowed, and the Fines remitted with costs against the Council.

INSPECTIONS.

The following tabular statement shows the number of visits and inspections made by the Sanitary Inspectors during the past year:—

Accumulations	64
Animals So-Kept	92
Council House Applications	18
Council House Inspections	14
Drainage Work (New Buildings)	261
Drainage Work (Existing Buildings)	431
Dwelling Houses—re complaints	1,217
" " — Overcrowding	4
" " — Infectious Disease	194
" " — Dirty or Verminous	63
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Swimming Bath	6
Schools	19
Miscellaneous	697
	5,382

HOUSING.

A considerable effort has been made to secure the demolition of a small number of houses condemned as unfit in the years preceding the war. Difficulties of providing suitable accommodation have been encountered particularly in cases where business premises were involved, for despite adverse conditions occupiers exhibited the greatest reluctance to move far from the original place of trade.

The Council decided late in the year that a comprehensive survey of all doubtful properties should be carried out as soon as possible, primarily to ascertain the complete housing needs of the district and to prepare the way for an intelligent programme of building in the future.

Informal undertakings were given following negotiations with the owner in respect of a number of sub-standard dwellings, and these buildings were subsequently demolished following the rehousing of the occupants. No statutory action under Part III of the Housing Act, 1936, was taken during the year.

No statutory overcrowding came to the notice of the Department although a number of cases arose where congestion of living and sleeping accommodation gave rise to complaint. As far as practicable action was taken by the Health and Housing Departments working in unison to find some relief for the affected families.

With the easing of the position in the supply of building materials and to a lesser degree building labour, rather less difficulty was experienced in effecting the repair of property requiring the attention of the inspectorial staff. Owners of uneconomic properties, however, were in many cases extremely critical when faced with extensive lists of necessary repairs, and perhaps not without some justification.

The following table indicates briefly the extent of the work under this head:—

Housing Defects (Detailed Analysis).

<i>Description</i>	<i>Outstanding 1951</i>	<i>Recorded</i>	<i>Remedied</i>	<i>Outstanding 1952</i>
Ceiling				
Plastering	26	62	58	30
Dampness	59	152	139	72
Eavesgutters, R.W.P.'s, etc....	96	169	171	94
Fireplaces, Grates, etc. ...	28	48	57	19
Floors	30	84	71	43
Roofs	54	149	123	80
Sinks, Lavatory Basins, etc. ...	12	20	20	12
Walls (Pointing, etc.) ..	47	100	98	49
Wall Plastering ...	65	91	107	49
W.C. Soil Pipes, etc.	12	28	27	13
Windows, Sash- cords, etc.	66	157	147	76
Woodwork	21	61	41	41
Yards, Paths	35	25	49	11
Miscellaneous ...	36	105	82	59
	587	1,251	1,190	648

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Food Preparation Premises, etc.

With very few exceptions, all premises used in the preparation, storage or sale of food have been brought up to the standard required by Section 13 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938. It is noteworthy that not only have the food establishments in the district reached a very satisfactory level in so far as structure and maintenance is concerned, but the managements and staff have been co-operative and without exception have attained a high degree of general cleanliness.

Under the provisions of Section 15 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, the Council made Byelaws for securing the observance of sanitary and cleanly conditions and practices in connection with the handling, wrapping and delivering of food sold or intended for sale for human consumption, and in connection with the sale or exposure for sale in the open air of food intended for human consumption. These Byelaws were probably unique in so far as they provide for the proper paving, drainage and cleansing of land where food is sold and the provision of sanitary accommodation and ablution facilities for persons engaged in the food trade here employed.

The registration of persons hawking foodstuffs in the district continued, together with premises on which stocks and appliances were stored. Thirteen persons were subject to this control. It appears very necessary in light of the great expansion in the number and the extent of the business transacted by these itinerant traders that greater safeguards be instituted in order to ensure the adequacy of the vehicles used, together with the suitability of the persons in charge.

FOOD & DRUGS ACT, 1938, SECTION 13. FOOD PREMISES.

Provisions of Section 13	Out-standing 1951	Re-corded	Re-medied	Out-standing 1952
(a) Sanitary convenience, etc., communicating directly with room	—	3	—	3
(b) Water cistern: drain vent or inlet of drain	—	—	—	—
(c) Defective structure	11	43	32	22
(d) Painting, cleansing of walls, ceilings, etc.	15	91	51	55
(e) Room used as sleeping place or no intervening ventilated space..	—	—	—	—
(f) Insufficient ventilation... ..	5	14	9	10
(g) Accumulation of refuse	7	25	19	13
(h) Cleanliness of personnel, room and apparatus	8	31	21	18
(i) Washing facilities	4	26	16	14
Hot water	4	20	16	8
	54	253	164	143

Meat Products for Export.

The amount of meat prepared, canned and sold abroad has shown a marked decrease and in consequence the pressure on the meat inspector in charge was not so great.

New premises for the dressing and preparation of carcase meat have been erected, so that the processes involved were carried out in a more expeditious and satisfactory manner.

The following table shows the amount of meat dealt with by the Department at the factory concerned:—

<i>Type</i>		<i>Quantity</i>			
<i>Beef.</i>					
Hindquarters		2,430			
Forequarters		330			
		<i>Tons</i>	<i>Cwts.</i>	<i>Qrs.</i>	<i>Lbs.</i>
Boneless		120	12	—	11
Kidneys		6	11	—	19

Condemnation of Foodstuffs.

Food condemned as unfit for human consumption during the year was a little above average, which was accounted for by certain consignments of canned goods. The total material condemned, however, gives little indication of the work involved in ensuring the safety and fitness of the district's food supply.

<i>Nature.</i>	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Quantities.</i>		<i>Lbs.</i>
		<i>Cwts.</i>	<i>Qrs.</i>	
Bacon, Ham, etc.			1	16 $\frac{1}{2}$
Biscuits				8 $\frac{3}{4}$
Butchers' Meat	1	6	3	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
Butter and Cheese			1	11
Dried Fruit		10	—	5
Fowl			1	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Puddings			2	2
Fish Cakes				6 $\frac{3}{4}$
Skim Milk Powder			2	0
	—	—	—	—
	1	18	3	24 $\frac{3}{4}$
	—	—	—	—

Chocolate	39 bars
Chicken	7 tins
Fruit Juice	22 tins
Fruit	359 tins
Fish	31 tins
Jam and Marmalade	15 tins
Lemonade Crystals	15 jars
Lemon Barley	1 bottle
Meat Products	398 tins
Milk	58 tins
Nuts	6 pkts.
Pickles	1 jar
Sauce	8 jars
Soups	9 tins
Vegetables	127 tins

Food Sampling.

In co-operation with the County Health Authority every food of major significance was sampled during 1952, the details of which are included in the Report of the Medical Officer of Health.

Milk Control.

Milk retailed in the area is of a high standard, approximately 95% being designated. Of the designated milk practically 100% is subjected to heat treatment, and therefore can be regarded as safe from dangerous pathological organisms.

It is, in the opinion of the Department, regrettable that it was not possible to examine samples of milk before pasteurisation. The failure to ascertain the condition of milk before treat-

ment places too great a responsibility and reliance on the staff and plant of pasteurising establishments, and completely fails to make provision for either the human or mechanical weaknesses inherent in the present arrangement.

With the foregoing exception sampling of milk was again satisfactorily carried out as the following table indicates:—

BIOLOGICAL (T.B.)			METHYLENE BLUE			PHOSPHATASE			TURBIDITY		
No.	Pos.	Neg.	No.	Sat.	Un-Sat.	No.	Sat.	Un-Sat.	No.	Sat.	Un-Sat.
24	—	24	107	104	3	96	77	19	1	1	—

Ice-Cream.

As other sugar confections became more readily available, the demand for Ice-Cream apparently levelled out, only five new applications for registration being received during the year. Situated as is the Urmston district, it is inevitable that large supplies of this comestible are brought in from adjacent areas, and unfortunately through the year certain outside manufacturers have not reached the high standard achieved by local producers.

The following table shows the results of the examination of ice-cream samples taken during the year:—

No. OF SAMPLES	METHYLENE BLUE Provisional Grade			
	1	2	3	4
41	22	7	5	7

FACTORY ACTS, 1937 and 1948.

For very many reasons it had not been found possible in the years immediately following the war, to give concentrated attention to factory inspections in the Trafford Park area, and, although visits were made from time to time to most of the premises here situated, it was perhaps inevitable that a large accumulation of matters arising from alterations and new development required attention.

In view of this it was decided at the commencement of the year to inspect every factory and workplace in the district, bringing to bear on the task the whole of the available resources of the Department.

The factory owners, managements and occupiers of offices proved on the whole most co-operative, even though in some cases the work involved was extensive and comparatively costly. No statutory action was found necessary, and in spite of this 38% of the requirements of the Department were carried out before the end of the year, and the remainder either in progress or in hand. Details of the foregoing are included in the appropriate table in the Medical Officer of Health's Report.

Out-Workers' premises:—The houses of Out-Workers resident in the district were regularly inspected by the Sanitary Staff and generally can be regarded as satisfactory. No cases of infectious disease occurred in any dwelling where home-work was carried on.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

The following trades are on the register of the Department:—

Soap Boilers	2
Gut Scraper	1

ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION.

Within the limitations imposed by other work and the availability of staff, every effort was made to combat the problem of aerial pollution which, to some degree, unfortunately appears to be increasing. The main factors influencing this retrograde trend would seem to be erection of specialised industrial undertakings outside the control of the local authority, insufficient public consciousness, indifferent or unsuitable fuels, and the lack of a regional body with appropriate powers and authority.

Without wishing to over-emphasise the deteriorating position in the area, most residents were painfully aware of a noticeable increase in the incidence of unpleasant odours throughout the year, the severity or otherwise being dependent on meteorological conditions prevailing from time to time. This state of affairs was due in no small measure to the operation of new undertakings in the Cheshire area, the control of which is vested in H.M. Alkali Inspector.

Relative to the foregoing, 223 inspections, observations and visits were made by the inspectorial staff throughout the twelve months.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

During the year 194 visits were made by the Sanitary Inspectors in connection with cases of infectious disease.

DISINFESTATION.

There has been a slight increase in the number of vermin-infested houses in the district. In all, 67 premises were treated by the application of a contact insecticide (i.e. Zaldecide, D.D.T.).

MORTUARY.

The Flixton mortuary maintained by the Department has been in use 9 times during the year, and I am indebted to the County Police for the following details:—

<i>Causes of Death.</i>	<i>Number.</i>
Natural Causes	7
Open Verdict	1
Accidental	1

STORAGE OF PETROLEUM SPIRIT.

During the past year, three of the major oil companies submitted schemes for the development of sites in Trafford Park in connection with the handling and storage of petroleum. Although this area has long been a centre of the heavy oil industry, large-scale storage of the lighter oils had never previously been considered.

Sixty-seven licences for the storage of petroleum or petroleum derivatives, and six for calcium carbide, were granted and the fees received in this connection amounted to £88 11s. 8d.

SHOPS ACT, 1950.

Generally, shop-keepers conformed with both the letter and the spirit of this Act. In only a very few instances was it necessary for the Department to intervene and then only on account of minor infringements of the statute re closing hours.

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES.

The Council again resolved to augment the existing public conveniences in the area, and as a first step negotiations have been entered upon to provide three additional sites in the Trafford Park area. Plans and specifications have been approved and it is hoped to commence work early in the financial year 1953-54.

Widespread and serious damage was again caused to fittings and installations provided; this wanton and so often pointless destruction of property provided as a public service sometimes makes one despair of our generation.

Existing Public Conveniences maintained by the Department are as under:—

<i>Situation.</i>	<i>Males.</i>					<i>Females.</i>
Station Road	2	W.C.'s,	6	urinal	stalls	3 W.C.'s
Davyhulme Circle ...	2	„	3	„	„	3 „
Moorside Road	1	„	1	„	„	2 „
Church Road	2	„	3	„	„	3 „

Two full-time attendants are employed on cleansing, maintenance and supervision.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949.

RODENT CONTROL.

The decline in major rat infestations in the industrial area of Trafford Park noted in the past two years has again been evident, and it was therefore possible for surveys to be of a wider scope and the number of properties inspected considerably increased.

Infestations by mice increased but were successfully controlled.

Routine treatments of the sewers, sewage works and refuse tip have kept the rat populations down to a low level.

New methods of treatment, suitable at the present time for use under certain conditions only, proved eminently successful and it does appear that progress in the newer and more efficient methods will bring about greater control of rats and mice than has ever been experienced in the past.

	TYPE OF PROPERTY				
	Local Authority	Dwelling Houses	Agricultural	All other (including business & industrial)	Total
Number of Properties inspected ...	30	81	18	82	211
Number of Rat infestations :					
Major ...	6	—	3	4	13
Minor ...	16	11	2	40	69
Number of properties seriously infested with mice	5	19	—	30	54
Total infested properties treated by Local Authority	27	24	5	67	123
Poisons used	Zinc Phosphide ... 5 lbs. Arsenic ... 3 lbs. 9 ozs. Antu ... 14 ozs. Warfarin ... 3 lbs. 10½ ozs.				
Bait used	Sausage Rusk ... 4 cwts. 1 qr. 7½ lbs. Bread Mash ... 3 qrs. 2 lbs. Medium Oat-meal ... 2 qrs. 6 lbs.				

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

Labour.—For the greater part of the year there was an almost continuous flow of workmen away from the Department and this, together with a slow replacement rate, has mitigated against a thoroughly efficient service. For a very short time, when the County's stable industry was affected by a trade recession, the number of workmen available and willing to take up employment with the Department increased, but with the improvement in trading this position quickly ended. Some way must obviously be found in the future to safeguard the labour available for essential public health services no matter how distasteful the tasks involved, as it will be admitted to be most unsatisfactory that the more unpleasant duties imposed on a local authority can only be executed efficiently when economic conditions are difficult and unemployment rife.

Transport.—The Department's transport is now adequate for all calls made upon it so far as the actual collection and disposal of refuse is concerned. A new "Austin" large capacity van was placed on order for delivery in the new year to replace an old "Scammell" vehicle used in salvage collection. Greater efficiency should ensue with a considerable reduction in the cost of collection of waste paper.

Transport at present in service is as follows:—

One SD Gully Emptier	1937
One Scammell 12 cubic yards rear-loader	1940
Two Dennis 10 cubic yards side-loaders	1946
One Dennis 10 cubic yards side-loader	1948
One SD 24½ cubic yards rear-loader	1949
One Dennis 10 cubic yards side-loader	1949
One Dennis 10 cubic yards side-loader	1951

General.—The number of bins in use in the district is 12,870. In addition there are 11 pail closets, 1 privy midden and 7,879 street gullies. Dustbins and pail closets were emptied weekly and the street gullies cleansed on at least three occasions during the year.

The total weight of domestic refuse collected was 10,885 tons and the weight of refuse of all types disposed of at the Meadow Road Tip was 16,079 tons.

Dustbin Replacement Scheme.—When the Council originally discussed the question of a rate-borne service, opinions as to the wisdom of adopting such a scheme were many and varied, and it is therefore with satisfaction that report may be made to the effect that in every respect success has been achieved.

The cost of the undertaking is less than was originally envisaged in spite of the pronounced increase in bin costs. Rate-payers generally welcome the innovation, and workmen who handle the equipment are much more content as the risk of injury to themselves decreases with the elimination of dangerous receptacles. Further, friction between contending parties as to the onus of bin provision has, of course, entirely disappeared.

During the year 817 bins were supplied by the Department, either as replacements or first issues at an average cost per unit of £1 9s. 10d., equal to £1,219 ; transport and other outgoings amounted to £87, giving a total charge for the year of £1,306 or a rate equivalent of 1·012d.

CLEANSING COSTS (including Bin Replacement Costs).

Expenditure	...	Refuse Collection	...	...	£12,632
"	..	Refuse Disposal	...	...	£1,440
Cost per ton	...	Collection	£1 3s. 2·5d.	}	£1 5s. 0d.
"	...	Disposal	1s. 9·5d.		
Cost per 1,000	...	Collection	£321 19s. 6d.	}	£358 12s. 1d.
population	...	Disposal	£36 12s. 7d.		
Cost per 1,000	...	Collection	£1,031 0s. 4d.	}	£1,148 11s. 0d.
houses	...	Disposal	£117 10s. 8d.		
Surplus of Salvage Income over expenditure	...				£3,251
Tonnage of domestic refuse	...				10,885 tons
Tonnage of all refuse	...				16,079 tons
Amount of domestic refuse per 1,000 of population					277 tons
Product of a penny rate	...				£1,290
Net expenditure on collection and disposal					
expressed as a rate poundage	...				8·388d.
No. of houses in the district	...				12,252
Population	...				39,233

N.B.—These costs relate to the Council's financial year.

Salvage.—The unprecedented price levels that salved materials reached in 1951, without doubt contributed to the near disastrous position local authorities found themselves in during 1952. A trade recession with unhealthily inflated prices for waste paper brought about a situation where prices fell alarmingly, and what was worse an inability of the trade to take up available supplies.

In these circumstances the Cleansing Section of the Department felt well satisfied in showing a reasonable profit on the year's work in spite of a fall in income of approximately 21 %.

Income for the period ending 31st December amounted to £6,737, with a surplus of income over expenditure of £3,251.

Income from the sale of salvage has for thirteen years acted as a very useful counter-balance in the Department's efforts to keep expenditure within bounds in a world of rising prices. The present indications are, however, that in the near future a more realistic view will have to be taken of the value of the cleansing service as a whole and the cost of running the same.

The following tables show briefly the district's salvage efforts over the past thirteen years:—

WASTE MATERIALS RECOVERED, INCLUDING KITCHEN WASTE.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Weight Tons</i>	<i>Value £</i>	<i>Collecting Allowances £</i>
1940	454	1,684	—
1941	769	2,523	—
1942	1,170	4,350	—
1943	1,020	4,248	—
1944	852	3,742	—
1945	703	3,088	9
1946	763	3,531	215
1947	728	3,208	260
1948	817	3,786	394
1949	886	4,321	364
1950	795	3,710	52
1951	790	8,522	—
1952	771	6,737	—
	10,518	£53,450	£1,294

TOTAL WEIGHT OF MATERIALS RECOVERED, 1940-1952.

<i>Material.</i>	<i>Tons</i>
Kitchen Waste	3,754
Waste Paper	5,334
Tins	513
Textiles	283
Bottles and Jars	216
Scrap Metals	265
Bones	52
Miscellaneous	101
Total	10,518 tons
